

Marat alone atop

SPORTS REPORTER

Uzbek GM Marat Dzhumayev maintained his solo lead with 6.5 points after the eighth round games of the sixth United Insurance & United Leasing Grand Masters Chess tournament at the NSC yesterday.

GM Sergey Tiviakov of Netherlands was in the second position with 6 points while GM Ziaur Rahman in the third position with 5.5 points.

Following is the eighth round games result: Dzhumayev drew with IM Enamul Hossain Rajib. Tiviakov beat FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Zia beat IM Reefat Bin Sattar. Barsov drew with FM Taibur Rahman. GM Niaz Murshed drew with IM Vakhidov Tahir of Uzbekistan. GM Jordi Magem Badals beat IM Abdullah Al Rakib. GM Alexander Goloschchapov drew with IM Neelotpal Das of India.



(L) Chairman of Australian consulting firm SMEC Bob Scott handing over the masterplan to develop a cricket academy to Bangladesh Cricket Board president Ali Asghar Loby while Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Lorraine Barker looks on during a reception at Hotel Sonargaon yesterday. (R) Two promising young cricketers Nazimuddin (extreme R) and Ziaur Rahman received cricket bats signed by Australian captain Ricky Ponting during the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

NZ open door for SL

AFP, Centurion

India handed Asian neighbours Sri Lanka a World Cup reprieve on Friday when they crushed New Zealand by seven wickets at Centurion.

The result means that Sri Lanka need to beat Zimbabwe in East London on Saturday if they are to clinch the last remaining place in the semifinals.

Defeat, however, would send the Kiwis instead into a last four showdown with defending champions Australia at Port Elizabeth on Tuesday.

Left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan took 4-42 as New Zealand were dismissed for just 146 after being put in by Saurav Ganguly in their Super Sixes match.

India were themselves reduced to 21-3 in reply before Mohammad Kaif steered his team to victory with an unbeaten 68 following a fourth-wicket stand of 129 with Rahul Dravid (53 not out).

"I guess it's good luck to Zimbabwe now," said Kiwi skipper Stephen Fleming. "We batted really poorly today. It was a good wicket and to score 146 is just won't be it."

Man-of-the-match Zaheer took two wickets off consecutive balls in his first over to dismiss Craig McMillan and Nathan Astle, as he reached 100 wickets in limited overs international.

"I had been disappointed with my form so far. Javagal Srinath and Ashish Nehra have been playing really well so it was good for me to do so well today," he said.

India skipper Ganguly surprised many people by winning the toss and electing to field but it was a decision which paid rich dividends as his side celebrated their eighth win in nine World Cup matches here.

"This is our third game at Centurion and I knew that the wicket gets better in the afternoon," said the skipper whose side had already made it through to the semifinals where

they face Kenya in Durban next Thursday.

Shane Bond had given New Zealand some early hope with the wickets of Virender Sehwag and Ganguly, while Daryl Tuffey accounted for Sachin Tendulkar after the maestro had made 15.

But Kaif and Dravid saw India to victory just as the rain started to fall over Centurion.

"I have said all along that we have lots of match-winners in the team and the middle order proved it today," Ganguly said.

However, it could have been a different story had wicket-keeper Brendan McCullum held a simple catch from Dravid off Bond when the Indian vice-captain had yet to score.

Meanwhile, India will be richer by 75 million rupees (1.56 million dollars) if they win the World Cup, said Indian board president Jagmohan Dalmyia.

"Reaching the semifinal is no mean achievement and it will be enhanced to 75 million rupees if it wins the World Cup."

India's win brought a huge sigh of relief from Sri Lanka coach Dav Whatmore anxiously watching the Centurion game on television in East London.

"It's game on now, and you'll find a very committed team on Saturday morning," said Whatmore.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the World Cup Super Sixes match between India and New Zealand at SuperSport Park on Friday:
NEW ZEALAND
McMillan c Harbhajan b Zaheer 0
Fleming c Tendulkar b Srinath 30
Astle lbw b Zaheer 0
Styris c Dravid b Nehra 15

McCullumb Zaheer	4			
Cairms c Zaheer b Harbhajan	20			
Harris lbw b Zaheer	17			
Oram b Sehwag	23			
Vettori c Ganguly b Harbhajan	13			
Tuffey c and b Mongia	11			
Bond not out	0			
Extras: (lb-5, nb-4, w-4)	13			
Total: (All out in 45.1 overs)	146			
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-0, 3-38, 4-47, 5-60, 6-88, 7-96, 8-129, 9-144				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	8	0	42	4
Srinath	8	0	20	1
Nehra	10	3	24	1
Harbhajan	10	2	28	2
Ganguly	2	0	4	0
Tendulkar	5	0	20	0
Sehwag	2	0	3	1
Mongia	0.1	0	0	1

INDIA				
Sehwag c Styris b Bond	1			
Tendulkar c Oram b Tuffey	15			
Ganguly b Bond	3			
Kaif not out	68			
Dravid not out	53			
Extras: (nb-2, w-8)	10			
Total: (For 3 wickets in 40.4 overs) 150				
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-9, 3-21				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tuffey	10	1	41	1
Bond	8	2	23	2
Oram	5	0	20	0
Vettori	5	0	18	0
McMillan	2	1	4	0
Styris	6.4	0	29	0
Harris	4	1	15	0

Result: India won by seven wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Zaheer Khan.
Toss: India.
Umpires: Peter Willey (Eng) and Daryl Harper (Aus)
TV umpire: Darrell Hair (Aus)
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (Sri)

Quips & Quites

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semifinal chances in jeopardy.
"I have consulted my family, friends and religious scholars and on their advice have decided to continue my international cricket. I have conveyed my decision to the cricket board."

Pakistan opener Saad Anwar on his decision to keep playing.
"There have been other issues to consider. It's a well-known fact that prior to the World Cup there was a lot of pressure on us as cricket players with the situation going on."

Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak on his team's doomed campaign.
"It's game on now."

Sri Lanka coach Dav Whatmore after India had beaten New Zealand to hand his team a semifinal lifeline.
"I think I was at my peak then and to be treated so badly really hurt."

Sri Lanka's Aravinda De Silva recalling being dropped from the national team three years ago.
"For a couple of four players this may be their last World Cup tournament. So we want to win it in style. We don't plan to do anyone any favours by way of team tampering."

Australia's Damien Martyn pledging the world champions will be going all out for victory against Kenya in their last Super Six game on Saturday.
"Then the game's on, you'll find a very committed team on Saturday morning. If the result goes in our favour on Friday, the boys will be jumping out of their skins."

Sri Lanka coach Dav Whatmore hoping his team will still be involved in the tournament on Saturday.
"You need accompanying acts to go with a maestro."
New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming on the recall of Daryl Tuffey to the team to complement Shane Bond.
"It's been tough. There have been a lot of political insinuations. It's been difficult for the players to keep focused on cricket."
Zimbabwe skipper Heath Streak on his team's problem-plagued World Cup campaign.

Shaun may

FROM PAGE 13
Boje would also be forced to join Pollock on the sidelines besides Allan Donald and Jonny Rhodes, who have both retired from international cricket.

Western Province batsman Graeme Smith, just 22, has been widely-tipped to take over the captaincy.

The South Africans are due to leave on March 28 for Sharjah to play in a tri-nations series with Sri Lanka and Pakistan before joining India for another three-nation tournament in Bangladesh.

South Africa will also play two Tests in Bangladesh.

Rich Indians

FROM PAGE 13
"I have made mistakes both on and off the field but I have kept learning."

Flower, whose brother Grant also plays in the Zimbabwe World Cup team, had been threatened with being dropped from the squad if he did not give up on his protest which bitterly attacked the Mugabe regime.

He refused and his place was secured when other senior players said they would not take the field if their star batsman was axed.

Atapattu

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Manliller	10	0	43	1
M'kenyeri	2	0	13	0
Ervine	3	0	24	1

ZIMBABWE

Wishart b Jayasuriya	43			
Manliller c Jayasuriya b G'ratne	19			
Friend b G'ratne	21			
A Flower lbw b de Silva	38			
G Flower c and b Jayasuriya	31			
Taibub Muralitharan	2			
Blight c de Silva b Fernando	1			
Ervine b Vaas	12			
Streak c Atapattu b Jayasuriya	2			
Matsikenyeri not out	1			
Hondob Vaas	0			
Extras: (lb-5, w-4, nb-3)	12			
Total: (All out in 41.5 overs)	182			
Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-68, 3-111, 4-140, 5-150, 6-151, 7-178, 8-181, 9-181				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Vaas	9.5	0	46	2
Gunaratne	7	0	33	2
De Silva	9	1	36	1
M'tharan	7	0	22	1
Jayasuriya	6	0	30	3
Fernando	3	0	10	1

Result: Sri Lanka won by 74 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Marvan Atapattu.
Toss: Sri Lanka.
Umpires: Brian Jerling (Rsa) and Rudi Koertzen (Rsa)

Problematic pitch

FROM PAGE 13
Australia are still waiting to discover the identity of their semifinal opponents.

However, it will be Sri Lanka if the Asian side manage to see off Zimbabwe on Saturday in East London.

And that could spell real danger to Australia's hopes of making the final, as the pitch at Port Elizabeth would be ideal for the wiles of Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan.

Premier Division Cricket League
Victoria SC v Mohammedan SC
Venue: BKSP ground
Young Pegasus v Surjo Tarun

Akram leads from front

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Akram Khan kept up his rich vein of form as Abahani raced to their seventh win in the GrameenPhone Premier League with a four-wicket win against BCB Development Squad at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

The experienced middle-order batsman struck an unbeaten 57 runs as the popular Dhanmondi outfit toppled a fighting BCB Development Squad total of 192-8 with four balls to spare.

It was yet another Akram show in a 45-over-a-side contest that improved Abahani's tally to 38 points in ten games.

The burly right-hander, who has remained the mainstay of Abahani's batting for over a decade, throttled his side to 196 for six with a carefully crafted half-century after opener Mehrab Hossain hammered a breezy 54 off 59 balls.

Akram struck four boundaries in his 80-ball vig.

Earlier, batting first, the BCB Development Squad thrived on a 111-run fourth stand between Kafi Khan and Ashiqur Rahman.

Kafi Khan scored highest 60 off 87 balls that included three fours and a six. Ashiqur Rahman scored exactly 50 off 83 deliveries. He struck four boundaries.

Mehrab gave Abahani a flying start. The discarded national opener smashed eight hits across

the rope and struck a sweetly timed six in his polished knock.

Akram Khan, who is enjoying his best season at the age of 34, was adjudged man of the match for yet another superb effort.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BCB DEV SQUAD: 192 for eight in 45 overs (Kafi Khan 60, Ashiqur Rahman 50, Nayeem 14; Alamgir Gazi 2/28, Ali Arman 2/38)

ABAHANI: 196 for eight in 44.2 overs (Akram Khan not out 57, Mehrab Hossain 54, Asadullah Khan 25, Sajjad Ahmed 14; Arafat Sunny 2/32)

UTTARA SC v BROTHERS UNION
In the other match at the Fatullah Stadium, Uttara Sporting Club defeated Brothers Union Club by three wickets.

The victory brightened Uttara's chances for a place in the Super Six as they raised their tally to 32 on completion of their 11 first-round matches.

Traditional giants Brothers scored 195 for five in a curtailed 40-over-a-side match with experienced batsman Halim Shah making 59 runs off 108 balls, including four fours.

In reply, Uttara, one of the two newcomers in the Premier League this year, reached 198 for seven in 38.5 overs.

Opener Moniruzzaman led the successful chase with swashbuckling 63 off 66 balls. He entertained the sparse Fatullah crowd with

five fours and two sixes. He was adjudged man of the match.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BROTHERS UNION: 195 for 5 in 40 overs (Halim Shah 59, Salim not out 42, Shadab Kabir 37; Faisal Hossain 2/45)

UTTARA SC: 198 for 7 in 38.5 overs (Moniruzzaman 63, Shahriar Nafiz 29, Arman Hossain 26, Rashed 15 not out, Mustakim 2/22, Shadab Kabir 2/34)

Jadukar Samad football

UNB, Dhaka

Gandaria Power Sun Club emerged champions in the 11th Jadukar Samad Kishor Football Tournament outplaying Lalbagh Churhata Azgar Lane Kishor XI 4-0 in the final at the outer stadium on Friday.

Rubel struck twice while Shakil and Arif scored apiece for the winners.

Later, Fisheries and Livestock Minister and Dhaka City Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka handed over the trophy to the winners.

Cricketer Academy

FROM PAGE 13
development in Bangladesh in 2000.

Meanwhile, Bob Scott, the chairman of SMEC, hoped the presentation of the bats and the proposal for a masterplan would consolidate links between the SMEC and the cricket development here.

"Australians and Bangladeshis share a common passion for the game of cricket," he said. "I am very pleased that we are able to work in a small way with the Australian High Commission, the Bangladesh Cricket Board and the Australian Cricket Board to assist the development of the game here."

The chairman of SMEC, which has been playing an important role in Bangladesh through projects in transport, flood protection, urban planning and environmental protection, also assured that they are looking at ways to further help the Board.

Sate Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman, Board bigwigs, a few national and former cricketers also attended the reception.

School handball begins today

UNB, Dhaka

The 13th Bata School Handball Tournament begins in the city today.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman will inaugurate the meet at 2:30 pm at the Dhanmondi Women Sports Complex.

A total of 32 schools including 15 girls' institutions will take part in the meet. The boy's championship will be held at the handball court adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium while the girl's competition will be played at Dhanmondi Women Sports Complex.

In the girl's meet, 15 schools split into four groups will compete. The group champions will qualify for the semifinals to be held on March 19.

Group A: Viharunnisa Noon School & College, Mirpur Bangla High School, Ahmed Bavani Academy and Bangladesh International School.

Group B: Scholastica, Loretto School, Mohammadpur Preparatory.

Group C: Sunydale, Maghbazar

Ispahani Girls School, Kamrunnesa Govt Girls High School and Lalmatia Girls School.

Group D: Willes Little Flower, Dhanmondi Tutorial, Lake Circus High School and Banani Bidiyaniketan.

In other meet, 17 schools will compete in four groups and the group champions will play in the semifinals on March 22.

Group A: Bandura Holy Cross High School, BAF Shahin School, Mirpur Shahid Smriti High School, Banani Bidiyaniketan and Bangladesh Rifles School & College.

Group B: Ansar VDP High School, Sunydale, Bangladesh International School and Rahmatullah High School.

Group C: Narinda High School, Willes Little Flower, The British School and Dhaka Govt Collegiate School.

Group D: Rajarbagh Police Lines School & College, Mirpur Bangla High School, Dhanmondi Tutorial and St Nicholas High School.

Bata Shoe Company, sponsors of the tournament, have provided Tk 1.44 lakh.

We'll like Lanka

FROM PAGE 13

the one-dayers which India suffered on the tour of New Zealand before the World Cup.

"I said before the match we just wanted to win and there was no grudge. We played well and deserved to win. But the win over Pakistan was the biggest, much bigger than this."

The Indian captain, however, took a swipe at former New Zealand skipper Martin Crowe, who had suggested during that tour that Ganguly should resign his post.

"All I can say is that I still see him in the commentary box," Ganguly said.

Ganguly surprised many people by winning the toss and electing to field but it was a decision which paid rich dividends as his side celebrated their eighth win in nine World Cup matches here.

"This is our third game at Centurion and I knew that the wicket gets better in the afternoon," said the skipper.

Shane Bond had given New Zealand some early hope with the wickets of Virender Sehwag for one

and Ganguly, who made three, while Daryl Tuffey accounted for Sachin Tendulkar after the maestro had made 15.

But Mohammad Kaif, with 68, and Rahul Dravid, 53, saw India to victory.

"I have said all along that we have lots of match-winners in the team and the middle order proved it today," Ganguly said.

"I believe a team needs to enjoy the game and we are enjoying our performance and the dressing room has a fantastic, enjoyable atmosphere.

"Off the field we are enjoying the company of each other and winning game after game adds to the enjoyment."

New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming was, meanwhile, left hoping for a miracle which would carry his team into the semifinals along with Australia, India and Kenya.

"I guess it's good luck to Zimbabwe now," said Fleming after he was bowled out for just 146 before India fought back from 21-3 to finish on 150-3 in 40.4 overs.

Maestro will be missed

FROM PAGE 13

"It will be a disappointment if we do not win the World Cup a second time," said the stylish middle-order batsman who hit 73 against South Africa and 92 in a lost cause against Australia.

De Silva is already the third most successful batsman in one-day history with 9,248 runs from 306 matches with 11 centuries before Saturday's last Super Sixes game against Zimbabwe.

This was in addition to the 6,361 runs he has in 93 Tests, studded with 20 centuries including a career-best 267 against New Zealand at Wellington in 1990-91.

De Silva is also a very useful off-spinner with 29 Test wickets and 103 in one-dayers.

"I am very satisfied with what I have done and want to be remembered as someone who has contributed to the cause of Sri Lankan cricket," he said.

"I may not be playing after this World Cup but am available to serve the game in the country in anyway."

The pocket-sized dynamo scored a match-winning 107 not out and took three wickets in the World Cup final against Australia in Lahore in March 1996 which remains the high point of his

career.

"That was the ultimate," he said. "To have contributed to Sri Lankan cricket's greatest moment is something I will cherish all my life."

De Silva won four man-of-the-match awards in the tournament, including the semifinal against India and the final.

"Our bowling was experienced in 1996 but that is something the side lacks at the moment and it is an area we have to focus really hard."

De Silva, who made his international debut in 1983, was known then more for his cavalier approach to batting than the accumulator he later became.

Former Pakistani captain Imran Khan realised the potential in the young man then and predicted he would become one of the greats if he concentrated in building his innings.

It's advice De Silva took seriously as his game sharpened with a stint with English county Kent in 1995.

De Silva rates New Zealand's Richard Hadlee and Wasim Akram of Pakistan as the two best fast bowlers he has faced and Australian Shane Warne and Pakistan's Abdul Qadir as the leading spinners.