

Groundsmen's workshop

SPORTS REPORTER
A day-long workshop for cricket groundsmen was held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday under supervision of ICC pitch consultant Andy Atkinson.

Selection chess

FROM PAGE 13
beat Rashel, Uten beat Shahjada, Dostagir beat Shahin, Rocket beat Amir, Nazir beat Siddique, Saiful beat Zahid, Rakib beat Alamgir, Zia beat Masud and Shahid beat Mohan. Kazal drew with Shamim.

Abahani at Mukti's

FROM PAGE 13
points from two games. On the other hand it was Rahmatganj's first point after a 1-2 defeat against Muktojodha.

This single point could be crucial for Rahmatganj provided that they win against Arambagh by a margin three goals in their final match and pray for a defeat of Abahani at the hands of Muktojodha.

While Abahani had reasons to be critical of their forward line, Muktojodha had no such complaints. Saiful Islam Moni celebrated his national call up with a 43rd minute strike.

Rwandan forward Gerald gave Muktojodha a 2-0 lead five minutes after the break before Kanchan sealed the fate of the match in the 62nd minute.

Today's matches
Kick-off time: 2:15 pm.
Sheikh Russell KC v Dhaka Wanderers
(Venue: Kamalapur)
Mohammedan SC v Dhanmondi Club
(Venue: Mirpur).

Biman land

FROM PAGE 13
The discarded Bangladesh all-rounder batted for two hours and faced 75 balls in a knock that featured four boundaries.

Former national opener Jahangir Alam, who scored 26 off 60 balls, was the other Biman batsmen to eventually reach double figures.

Bangladesh Test opener Javed Omar scored a duck while discarded Bangladesh batsman Mohammad Ashrafuiq made only five runs.

Earlier, Jessore were all out for 107 in 42.1 overs after they elected to bat. Former Bangladesh seamer Anisur Rahman and left-arm spinner Saifullah Khan tore apart the Jessore innings with three wickets each.

Biman will now face the winners of the second semifinal between favourites Chittagong or Comilla to be held in Mymensingh on November 17.

Away in Mymensingh, Comilla reached the semifinals with a five-wicket win over Projpur in the last Group B encounter.

Electing to bat, Projpur were all out for 124 in 48.1 overs.

In reply, Comilla, aided by an unbeaten 50 from middle order batsman Wasel Ahmed, scored 125 in 35.5 overs with five wickets to spare.

SCORES IN BRIEF
Biman v Jessore
Venue: BNS
JESSORE: 107 all out in 42.1 overs (Tushar 26, Raju 20, Saifullah 3-24, Anis 3-32)
BIMAN: 108 for 7 in 37 overs (Sanwar 37 n.o., Jahangir 26, Russell 3-37)
Result: Biman won by three wickets.

Projpur v Comilla
Venue: Mymensingh
PROJPUR: 124 all out in 48.1 overs (Bipul 33, Sohag 21, Jewel 14, Sujan 3-15, Rajan 3-21)
COMILLA: 125 for 5 in 35.5 overs (Wasel 50 n.o., Sumon 18, Ashiq 16, Jewel 3-14)
Result: Comilla won by five wickets.

Four Kiwis opt out



AFP/REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan cricket authorities on Thursday expressed disappointment at the pullout of four New Zealand players from a scheduled tour of Pakistan over danger warnings.

"That players are pulling out is inexplicable," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) spokesman Samiul Hassan told this news agency, referring to unspecified threats against New Zealand players.

"We are disappointed and we will write a letter to NZC to register our disappointment."

Hassan said it was a disappointment and a setback for Pakistani cricket, "especially when keeping in mind that the South Africans have just completed an incident-free tour and were satisfied with the security."

"The PCB is watching the situation closely, but it finds it hard to understand that one letter, the details of which are

not known, could cause so much reaction," he said.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) officials revealed earlier Wednesday that players had received warnings that their safety would be threatened if they travelled to Pakistan later this month.

Four players senior batsmen Craig McMillan, Lou Vincent, Scott Styris and Ian Butler have refused to tour, placing question marks over the trip.

The team's video analyst, Zach Hitchcock is also returning to New Zealand.

The Kiwis fled Pakistan in May 2002 when a suicide car bomber killed 14 people outside their hotel in terror-hit southern city Karachi in the middle of a one-day tour. The November tour is meant to be a revival of last year's abandoned tour.

NZC did not reveal details of the threat but it has delayed naming the team to tour Pakistan until an investigation into the warning is completed.

Foreign teams stayed away from Pakistan following the May 2002 bombing and only began returning in September when Bangladesh toured,

followed by South Africa.

Both tours came off peacefully although South Africa avoided Karachi and northwest city Peshawar on the grounds of risk and the team was flanked by presidential-level security squads.

"Security is perfect. Recently South Africa toured Pakistan and played five one-day games and three Test matches, so that's not a problem," Hassan said.

"It's a matter between New Zealand players and New Zealand Cricket (NZC). They have to deal with it. Naturally we would have liked a full-strength New Zealand team to come to Pakistan."

New Zealand only decided to proceed with the tour last week after a comprehensive security review by an independent adviser, but gave players and officials the option of staying home.

But they asked the PCB in advance to not schedule any of their matches in Karachi or in Peshawar, a city near the Afghan border.

New Zealand are due to arrive in Islamabad on November 20 to play one-dayers in Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore.

RU football

RU CORRESPONDENT

The History and Cultural Department won the inter-department football tournament of Rajshahi University stadium yesterday.

They outplayed Political Science 3-1.

Altab scored twice while Mamun added the other goal. Shimul grabbed a consolation goal for the losers.

RU Vice-Chancellor Professor Faisal Islam Faruki was present as the chief guest.

Hinds rues the miss

REUTERS, Bulawayo

West Indies batsman Wavell Hinds was left to rue what might have been his fifth Test century on the first day of the second Test against Zimbabwe on Wednesday.

The opener roared to 81 off 109 balls, smashing 12 fours and two sixes, before coming down the pitch to a delivery from left-arm spinner Ray Price and being easily stumped by wicketkeeper Tatenda Taibu.

"I was set for a hundred but then I got myself out," Hinds told Reuters. "I'll have to work on that very hard next time around."

West Indies scored 282 for three on an easy paced pitch before a thunderstorm washed out the last 27 overs of the day's play. Brian Lara looked set for a big innings on 77 not out, with Ramnaresh Sarwan on 46.

"It's a batsman's wicket, but you still need to apply yourself irrespective of the surface you play on," Hinds said.

"Zimbabwe bowled pretty decently to start with, but once you got stuck in it was pretty easy to score freely on that wicket."

Hinds said his side were would look to press home their advantage.

"Anywhere close to 500 would be a good shout and then we need to rustle up 20 Zimbabwean wickets, perhaps with spin on what could become a rough surface," he said.

The mood was less buoyant in the Zimbabwe camp after a day of bowling and fielding in stifling heat.

"It was a disappointing day for us," Zimbabwe coach Geoff Marsh told Reuters. "We just didn't get the right line and length, and we allowed them to hit too many fours."

"When you've got a player like Brian Lara out there you can't afford to bowl badly."

"They also ran very well between the wickets and picked up some singles we should have stopped."

Marsh agreed with Hinds's assessment of the pitch.

"It's a flat track, that's for sure, with a bit of turn in it and it looks as though it might break up," Marsh said. "Batting later in the game is going to be difficult."

Best of Love

AFP, Melbourne

It was a lucky November 13 for Test right-hander Martin Love as he posted his highest Sheffield Shield cricket score of 256 not out here Thursday on the third day of Queensland's clash with Victoria.

Love's score beat his previous best of 228 in this competition as Queensland cracked 526 for five wickets, leading Victoria's first-innings 381 for nine wickets declared by 145 runs with a day remaining.

It was the highest individual first-class score at the Junction Oval, beating the 249 South African Kepler Wessels made for Queensland against Victoria in 1982-83.

Love, the Queensland skipper, and James Hopes also shared a record fifth-wicket stand of 236 for Queensland in the competition, beating the old mark of 231.

But part-time spinner David Hussey caught and bowled the unlucky Hopes for 97.

BCCI taking its time



AFP, Bangalore

India's cricket selectors, worried at the team's recent lacklustre performance, on Thursday put off the selection of the squad for the coming tour of Australia.

The five-member selection committee, headed by former Test stumper Syed Kirmani, were due to name the team for the tour which includes four Tests and a one-day series also featuring Zimbabwe.

But secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Karunakaran Nair emerged from the two-hour meeting to hand out a list of 20 probables, saying the touring squad of 16 will be named after Saturday's key one-dayer against New Zealand in Hyderabad.

The winners of the day-night game at the Lal Bahadur Stadium will join world champions Australia in the TVS Cup tri-series final at Calcutta's Eden Gardens next Tuesday.

The selectors are not permitted to speak to the media, but sources told this news agency that "some players have

been put on notice."

"No one can take their places for granted. They must perform in Hyderabad or they will miss the bus," the source said.

"The selectors are very unhappy with the way the team has played this season and could not arrive at a consensus on the 16."

India were held to draws by New Zealand in two Test matches last month and have won just one of their five matches so far in the one-day series.

Among the 20 probables who have not figured in recent Test matches are opener Sadagopan Ramesh, middle-order batsman Hemang Badani, seamers Aavishkar Salvi and Irfan Pathan, left-arm spinner Murali Kartik and wicketkeeper Deep Dasgupta.

Pathan, who led India's under-19 team to victory in a four-nation tournament in Pakistan earlier this month, and Salvi have yet to play a Test match.

The selectors, meanwhile, picked Salvi to replace Nehra for Saturday's match in Hyderabad and the final, if India qualify.

Nehra, the left-arm seamer, went for 0-80 against Australia here on

Wednesday in his first match since the World Cup final in March after recovering from a leg injury.

The Indian team, which leaves for Australia on November 21, will play two warm-up matches before the first Test starts at the Gabba in Brisbane on December 4.

The second Test will be played in Adelaide from December 12-16 followed by the third at Melbourne (December 26-30) and the fourth at Sydney (January 2-6).

The team for the subsequent one-day series also featuring Zimbabwe will be named during the later part of the Test series.

20 PROBABLES
BATSMEN: Saurav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Akash Chopra, Virender Sehwag, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkat-sai Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Hemang Badani, Sadagopan Ramesh.

SEAMERS: Zaheer Khan, Ajit Agarkar, Ashish Nehra, Laxmipathy Balaji, Aavishkar Salvi, Irfan Pathan.

SPINNERS: Harbhajan Singh, Anil Kumble, Murali Kartik.

WICKETKEEPERS: Parthiv Patel, Deep Dasgupta.

Poland end

FROM PAGE 16

after finishing third in Group Four.

The home side opened the scoring in the sixth minute when Krzynowek's corner was poorly cleared by Italy goalkeeper Francesco Toldo and Bak took full advantage by prodding home from close range.

Italy fell further behind 12 minutes later and once again Krzynowek was involved, clipping a free-kick into

the path of Klos whose firm header gave Toldo no chance.

Poland had barely finished celebrating when Cassano hauled the Italians back into the match 60 seconds later. Parma midfielder Marco Marchionni, another player making his international debut, fed Christian Vieri whose flicked header found Cassano and the Roma

striker coolly clipped the ball past the advancing Jerzy Dudek.

Italy enjoyed plenty of possession in the second half but failed to threaten in the final third, and Poland put the result beyond doubt in the closing stages.

Maciej Zurawski's low drive hit the post and Krzynowek reacted quickly, following up with a fierce shot which struck the underside of the bar and bounced down over the goal line.

On Tuesday the Italian team together with a Polish delegation met Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

Italy captain Fabio Cannavaro presented the pontiff with a jersey signed by all the players in the national team, while France Carraro, president of Italy's football federation, donated a crystal football.

'Rude' van Nistelrooy!

FROM PAGE 16

ten, it doesn't matter," the 27-year-old told BBC Radio Five Live.

"It is not about me or my disappointment, it's about going to the finals in Portugal next year where I want to perform."

"If I don't play and other players have to do a job, then I'll support them and hope we go to Portugal."

"That's our ultimate goal, especially for me, as I've never been to a major tournament."

Barcelona's Patrick Kluivert is expected to start as Advocaat's lone striker against the Scots and van Nistelrooy admits he is no closer to getting into the starting line-up.

"Nothing has really changed," added the Dutchman, who has scored eight Premiership goals for United this season.

"I will definitely play in Euro 2004 if Holland get there," said Stam, now at Lazio.

"But once that is over I think it will be the end of the international game for me. So getting there is very important to me and has made the game all the more important."

"The manager doesn't feel that Kluivert and I can play together - but he

has said if we qualify it is a partnership that we can work on."

Meanwhile Advocaat, and Dutch defender Jaap Stam, said they will quit international football if they are piped to Euro 2004 by Scotland.

Advocaat has not had an easy ride since taking charge of the national side and failing to overcome Berti Vogts' men in the play-off would be the last straw.

"If we don't qualify and we don't go then I quit," said Advocaat.

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India batted out



AFP, Bangalore

Skipper Ricky Ponting and Adam Gilchrist hammered rapid-fire centuries to shape Australia's 61-run victory over India in a TVS Cup triangular one-day cricket series match here on Wednesday.

Ponting hit a 103-ball 108 not out and Gilchrist 111 off 104 balls as world champions Australia posted a massive 347-2 after electing to bat on a good pitch in a day-night game.

India were virtually batted out of the match before finishing at 286-8 despite a robust 89 from master batsman Sachin Tendulkar.

Tendulkar sustained India's hopes of chasing the highest-ever total to win a match, but his brilliance was just not good enough to stop Australia from scoring a fifth successive victory.

India and New Zealand will now clash in the last league match at Hyderabad on Saturday to decide Australia's opponents in the final.

Australia finished their league

engagements with five wins from six games, while New Zealand and the hosts have one victory apiece from five matches.

"It does not matter who we play in the final," said Ponting.

Tendulkar put on 103 for the opening wicket with Virender Sehwag (39) before skipper Saurav Ganguly tried to keep the momentum with an attractive 31-ball 37, but the Australian total remained beyond India's reach.

Tendulkar hit one six and 12 fours in his 91-ball knock before inside-edging a low delivery from Ian Harvey on to his stumps.

"It was a tough comeback," said Ganguly, returning to the squad after nearly a month lay-off due to a thigh injury.

"It was a good pitch, but a total of 347 was too much. Overall, we batted well."

The match nearly revived the World Cup final nightmare for India, who were all out for 234 chasing a massing Australian total of 359-2 in South Africa in March.

Ponting, who scored an unbeaten 140 in the Cup final, yet again proved India's tormentor after Gilchrist had put his team on course for a big total with his ninth century.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the day-night match between India and Australia in the TVS Cup triangular one-day cricket series on Wednesday:

AUSTRALIA: 347 for 2 in 50 overs (Gilchrist 111, Ponting 108, Martyn 61; Kumble 1-60)

INDIA: Sehwag b Harvey 39, Tendulkar b Harvey 89, Laxman c Symonds b Clarke 18, Ganguly c Bichel b Symonds 37, Dravid c and b Kaspruwicz 34, Yuvraj lbw b Symonds 20, Kaif b Symonds 8, Zaheer run out 2, Kumble not out 12, Kartik not out 4

Extras: (b-5, lb-6, nb-1, w-11) 23
Total: (For 8 wkts in 50 overs) 286

Fall of wickets: 1-103, 2-148, 3-172, 4-217, 5-254, 6-254, 7-258, 8-277

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Williams (8/0/43/0), Kaspruwicz (10/0/37/1), Bichel (9/0/46/0), Symonds (9/0/42/3), Harvey (10/0/71/2), Clarke (4/0/36/1)

Result: Australia win by 61 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Adam Gilchrist.
Next match: India v NZeland, Nov 15.

Lara lights up Bulawayo



AFP, Bulawayo

Brian Lara became the most prolific batsman in West Indian Test cricket history here on Thursday, leading his side to a first innings total of 481 on the second day of the first Test against Zimbabwe.

In reply Zimbabwe were in trouble on 45-3 by tea after their openers Vusi Sibanda and Trevor Gripper were out for two and one respectively.

The second day belonged to Lara who past the Windies' previous top scorer Viv Richards when reaching 107 runs.

He went on to score 191 in his 22nd Test century by lunch but was out second ball afterwards.

By then he had amassed 8,625 runs and must now have in his sights an aggregate of 10,000 a total only reached by Allan Border, Steve Waugh and Sunil Gavaskar.

Lara is now the seventh highest runs gatherer among all the Test playing countries.

Collymore not out 13, Edwards c Taibu b Blignaut 3, Extras: (b-5, lb-8, nb-5, w-2) 20
Total: (All out in 107 overs) 481

Fall of wickets: 1-73, 2-146, 3-161, 4-351, 5-389, 6-394, 7-422, 8-449, 9-475

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes Blignaut (20/4/86/4), Streak (24/4/87/1), Mahwire (15/3/79/0), Price (43/1/199/5), Gripper (5/1/17/0)

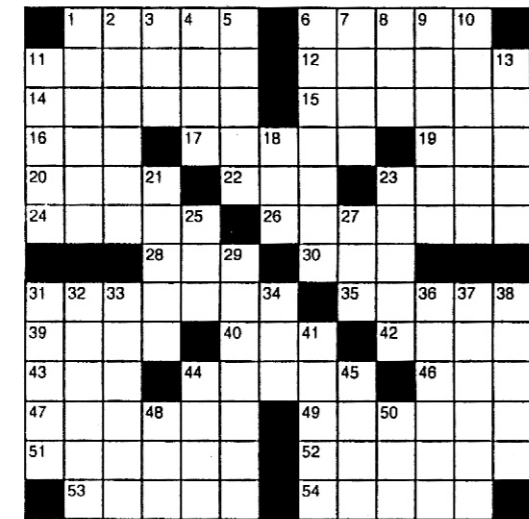
Zimbabwe: First innings
Sibands c and b Edwards 2, Gripper b Dillon 1, Vermeulen not out 17, Carlisle b Edwards 11, Wishart not out 11, Extras: (w-1, nb-2) 3, Total: (For 3 wkts in 21 overs) 45

Fall of wickets: 1-5-2, 10-3-31

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes Hinds (2/0/6/0), Edwards (7/2/16/2), Dillon (9/4/11/1), Collymore (1/0/6/0), Banks (1/0/6/0), Gayle (1/1/0/0)

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Exaggerated comedy
6 Super hit
11 Court ending card?
12 Bed canopy
14 Back in the water
15 Recitative passage
16 A/C meas.
17 Decreases
19 Car in a 1964 song
20 Vegas trans-actions
22 Yalle
23 Artist Mondrian
24 Geometry answers
26 Pheasant hunters, e.g.
28 Journal
30 Born
31 Con
35 Tim and Tyne
39 Province of Spain
40 Label
42 Profound



CRYPTOQUIP
S N S V A K G B E E D L F A
T B F T G F G D L D H Y X D E A X F
B P A K F F G D B F F N T ? N F

H B Y F G D F A E Y F A X V
Yesterday's Cryptogram: I'VE BEEN TOLD A LOAD OF VERY FUNNY STORIES, BUT THEY'RE TOO HUMOROUS TO MENTION.

Today's Cryptogram Clue: E equals P

The Cryptogram 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.

Kasparov draws with machine



AFP, New York

Chess czar Garry Kasparov on Tuesday tied his first game against the computer "X3D Fritz" after wrestling with the machine for about three and a half hours.

Kasparov, who was playing whites, agreed to a draw after 37 moves.

The 40-year-old Russian-American will play three more games against "X3D Fritz" at the New York Athletic Club, but he is resigned to the fact that soon chess grandmasters will stand no chance against computers.

Kasparov played wearing three-D glasses, gazing at a chess board that appears to float in the air. He dictated piece movements with voice commands, and rotated the board with a joystick.

The International Computer Games

Association and the United States Chess Federation, which will be holding the next games on November 13, 16 and 18, say it is the first time a chess challenge has been fought "in total virtual reality."

Kasparov is considered the world's best chess player, even though he lost the world champion title to Vladimir Kramnik in 2000. This is his third series against a computer. He lost to Deep Blue in 1997 and tied with Deep Junior in February.

"X3D Fritz" is an upgraded version of "Fritz," the machine which took on Kramnik in Bahrain in 2002, tying him four to four.

"Five years from now, it will be impossible to beat a machine in long matches," Kasparov predicted in a press conference ahead of the series.

"But all this makes it more exciting. Each time we have to be more creative, each time I have to spend more time analyzing the machine's performance, the software engines that are delivered to us," he said.