

Karate meet begins on May 19

SPORTS REPORTER

The first ever divisional karate competition, organised by Bangladesh Karate Federation, will begin on May 19 at six divisional venues across the country. The opening match will be held in Khulna.

Some 1,500 participants from six divisions will take part in the meet. 27-day meet that includes eight events for men and six for women.

Sponsors Samsung Electra International Limited would provide Tk 400,000 to run the competition, Karate Federation general secretary Moazzem Hossain told a press conference at the National Sports Council (NSC) on Sunday.

Federation president Akkas Ali Molla and vice president Munshi Bazul Anam were present at the press conference.



New Zealand tailender James Franklin defends during the third day of the third Test in Johannesburg on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

BKSP back to winning ways

SPORTS REPORTER

Saikat Ali helped BKSP sink Khulna Zilla School by ten wickets in the quarterfinal of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket tournament at the Jagannath Hall ground yesterday.

The young pace bowler took three top-order wickets of the Khulna school as they were shot out for a mere 40 runs, with Hassan scoring 13. Forkan and Mominul took two wickets each for BKSP.

When the Saver-based sports institution batted, it took them just 32 minutes and 11 overs to chase down the target.

Opener Abhishek did most of the scoring with 31 runs.

The other three quarterfinals were abandoned due to rain. The matches will be held today.

Dhoni for rotation

CRICINFO, undated

India wicketkeeper Mahendra Dhoni says that rotating players will help counter the burnout issue and prolong the careers of players.

"When a rotation policy is there, there is no issue of burnout. We get enough rest in between (matches) to recharge our batteries," Dhoni told PTI.

"It (rotation) gives every player a chance to excel. If the same eleven are playing continuously, the players will get burnt out.

"Rotation allows other guys in the 14-15 member squad a chance to gain experience so that when the right time comes they can also excel. There should not be any insecurity. It (rotation) is for their own good, for a long career you need to preserve yourself."

Warne at it again!

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It was widely assumed that last year's epic Ashes contest, where Warne took 40 wickets only to finish on the losing side, would be the legendary leg-spinner's final Test campaign on English soil.

"If I'm bowling well and enjoying it, I've got no right to say this is my last Test match in Sydney next year," said Warne, who will be 37 in September.

Roonster forces

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pitch in the last few months, while Ledley King, out of action with yet another metatarsal problem, will be keeping his fingers crossed.

Eriksson has said he will know his first-choice 23 and that the extra four will be told that they are reserves.

England face Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago and Sweden in the first round.

Smith steers

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Centurion by 128 runs and the second Test in Cape Town was drawn.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the third day of the third and final Test between South Africa and New Zealand at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg on Sunday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 119

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 186

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 214-6)

Pappas c Hall b Kallis	15
Howlbw b Steyn	4
Fleming c De Villiers b Kallis	37
Styris c and b Steyn	42
Astle c Boucher b Steyn	45
Oram c Dippenaar b Steyn	27
McCullum c Boucher b Pollock	5
Vettori c De Villiers b Hall	60
Franklin b Pollock	19
Mills not out	0
Martin c Amla b Hall	0
Extras (b-5, lb-17, nb-4, w-3)	29
Total: (All out in 78.5 overs)	283
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-40, 3-82, 4-158, 5-177, 6-190, 7-239, 8-283, 9-283	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Steyn	22	3	91	4
Ntini	17	4	44	0
Kallis	14	1	40	2
Hall	12.5	1	50	2
Pollock	13	3	36	2

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings

Smith c McCullum b Franklin	68
Dippenaar c McCullum b Martin	37
Amla b Mills	28
Kallis c How b Mills	13
Prince not out	43
De Villiers b Franklin	5
Boucher b Franklin	6
Pollock not out	6
Extras: (b-4, lb-5, nb-3, w-2)	14
Total: (For 6 wks in 47.3 overs)220	
Fall of wickets: 1-69, 2-130, 3-159, 4-167, 5-180, 6-207	

Did not bat: Hall, Steyn, Ntini

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Martin	17	1	64	1
Franklin	13.3	0	67	3
Mills	11	3	49	2
Oram	2	0	8	0
Styris	3	0	12	0
Vettori	1	0	11	0

Result: South Africa won by 4 wickets and win the series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Graeme Smith.

Man-of-the-series: Makhaya Ntini.

Goals galore

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Over Kushtia Khas Mothurapur Secondary School while Pabna Younus Ali High School played to a 1-1 draw with Magura Govt. High School.

At the Feni Stadium, Chhagalnaiya Pilot High School defeated Bijoy Nagar High School by 2-0 goals while Noakhali Shamsunnahar High School beat Khagrachhari Technical School & College 1-0.

At the Comilla Stadium, Comilla Moyra High School defeated Bramanbaria Adampur Fazil Madrasa by 2-1 goals.

At the Sirajganj Stadium, Sirajganj Kaberpura Senior Madrasah overpowered Gazipur Jangalia High School by a solitary goal.

Apache looks

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PSV Eindhoven, Atletico Madrid, Bayern Munich and Inter Milan all willing to part with 8 million pounds.

However, Tevez was unable to handle the celebrity status his performances afforded and Atletico terminated talks, while the negative publicity saw him expelled from the national squad.

Feeling betrayed, he took his revenge by leaving Boca to sign for Brazil's Corinthians in December 2004 for almost 13 million pounds, but his excessive wages brought resentment from team-mates which led to further bouts of bumpy wined with his fists.

But within months, his performances and perhaps a new-found maturity had won over the critics. "He's got to go to the World Cup because he's not only the best striker in Argentina, but the best striker in the world," his club coach, Antonio Lopes, said recently.

Jose Pekerman, his national coach, seems to agree, with Tevez likely to play alongside Hernan Crespo this summer. With bullets provided by Messi and Juan Roman Riquelme, the Argentines' attacking options are enviable.

But the squad is thought to lack depth and the team ranked ninth in the world are reserved about their chances. That said, if Tevez can make the same impact he did two years ago, a first world title since Maradona's magic twenty years ago could become a reality.

Bucknor angry at TV cos

Cricket

AFP, Georgetown

International Cricket Council elite panel umpire Steve Bucknor has expressed outrage at some television production companies doctoring images to make umpires look bad and key players look good.

Bucknor, who holds the world record for the most appearances in Tests, has recounted personal experience of TV personnel misusing the TV technology to influence decisions in matches.

"It has been known to happen where the technology has been used to make umpires look bad," he said.

"Mats (the line graphic used to adjudge lbw decisions) have been moved, balls have disappeared, ball hitting the bat and only coming up

into the fielder's hands, but between the bat and the hand, no ball is found and you are told, 'Sorry, we don't have that clip, we can't show it.'"

Bucknor, who has stood in 111 Tests and 139 one-day internationals, including four World Cup finals, said it all depended on who was umpiring and who was batting.

"Sometimes nothing is shown because the batsman was a key batsman and getting out at that stage would have made life very difficult for that team.

Bucknor said there was a place for technology in the game, but when things like this occur, it makes the job of the umpires extremely difficult erodes trust between them and the players.

"In the beginning of my career, umpires were trusted," he said.

"Today, the technology shows up his mistakes, and makes life a little bit difficult for umpires, especially

when it has been known to happen that technology has been used to make umpires look bad."

Bucknor also expressed disappointment that umpires were not consulted about a trial that would allow international players three appeals per innings against umpires' decisions at this year's ICC Champions Trophy in India.

The ICC Cricket Committee has recommended that players be allowed a limited number of appeals to the third umpire, if they feel a decision made by the on-field umpire is incorrect.

Bucknor is currently sharing umpires' duties with Billy Doctrove, his fellow West Indian on the elite panel, and New Zealander Billy Bowden during West Indies' seven-match ODI series against Zimbabwe at home.

Sanath forced to go?

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Ashantha de Mel, the newly appointed Sri Lanka chairman of national selectors, has alleged that Sanath Jayasuriya was forced to retire from Test cricket. He has also blamed his country's cricket establishment for the "mess" that the national side is in.

Sri Lanka's fortunes have dipped significantly since an interim committee took over last year -- they slipped from second to sixth in the ICC's one-day rankings and from fourth to seventh in Tests - and de Mel has criticised Tom Moody, the national coach, for failing to deliver.

Speaking to the Sunday Island,

de Mel, 46, claimed that Jayasuriya's surprise decision to quit Test cricket was a result of pressure from Lalith Kaluperuma, a former selection head.

"I have very reliable information that he was forced to retire," de Mel said.

"I was surprised when I heard that he was going to retire. If a player wants to retire he does that before a series, but on this instance he was forced to retire and for me it's totally wrong. They should have at least respected the man because he has done so much for the country, but on this instance he was basically asked to pack his bags and go home."

"When the selectors knew that Marvan [Atapattu] is not going to make it to England with his back problem they should have contin-

ued with Jayasuriya. He just played a county season in England last year and knows the conditions well and is the only Sri Lankan to have scored a double hundred in England. What more credentials do you want?"

On Moody's role as coach, de Mel said the Australian had failed to come up with results.

"I wonder whether Tom is the right candidate. He's basically a coach who speaks of strategy," he said.

"You've got to face the fact that during John's (Dyson) time we were number two in the world. His only blemish came against Australia, the number one team in the world. I can't understand why a man who had produced results was sent home."

Sachin aims to tour WI

PTI, Mangalore

Batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar is on a two-day visit to a famous temple near here to perform religious rituals.

Tendulkar, accompanied by family members, including his wife Anjali, offered special pooja and "Sarpa Sanskara" ritual at the Shree Kukke Subramanya temple on Sunday.

Other rituals, "Ashlesha Bali" and "Naga Pratishte", are slated to be performed tomorrow.

Tendulkar said that he is fit and looking forward to play in the Test series against West Indies starting on June 2.

"I am fit now. I am looking forward to the West Indies tour," Tendulkar said in an informal chat with reporters.

Appeals system almost a reality

Cricket

AFP, London

The prospect of players being allowed to challenge umpires' decision at this year's ICC Champions Trophy in India moved a step closer to reality after the International Cricket Council's cricket committee gave a narrow endorsement to a trial rule change on Sunday.

By just six votes to five members of the committee, who'd been meeting at the governing body's Dubai headquarters for two days, decided to recommend players be allowed three appeals per innings to the third umpire if they feel a decision made by the on-field umpire is incorrect.

The recommendation was for the measure to be trialed at the Champions Trophy and then be reviewed after that tournament.

However the committee, which is chaired by India great Sunil Gavaskar and whose members include former Australia captain Allan Border and ex-England pace bowler Angus Fraser, expressed concerns regarding the authority of on-field umpires.

Any attempt to introduce the system at the Champions Trophy in October and November, as with all the committee's decisions, would have to be approved by the chief executives' committee and, if that approval is forthcoming, then the ratified at the ICC board meeting.

The cricket committee also recommended that the equipping of umpires with earpieces connected to the stump microphones be mandatory in all international matches.

The trial would not include the use of technology such as HawkEye or the Snickometer but would include the lines super-imposed on the screen between the two sets of

stumps by broadcasters to help determine where the ball pitches and the point of impact on the batsman's pads.

Sehwag wishes Ganguly well

BBC ONLINE, undated

India opener Virender Sehwag hopes former captain Sourav Ganguly can win a place back in the national squad.

Ganguly, 33, has not played for his country since the third Test against Pakistan in Karachi in February.

"Sometimes we miss Ganguly. He is still playing first-class cricket and hopefully he will get a chance again."

"He has 10,000 one-day runs and 5,000 Test runs. India won most of the time he got a hundred -- he is a fantastic player," Sehwag explained.

"He supported me a lot. He backed Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Ashish Nehra, Ajit Agarkar and Mohammad Kaif."

Ganguly has been in and out of the team since a row with coach Greg Chappell during the tour of Zimbabwe last September.

Former Australia captain Chappell has come in for criticism in the Indian media for being too heavy-handed with his players but Sehwag has defended his style.

"He's not a control freak. As the coach he is the head of the family," the 27-year-old explained.

"He can instruct you and guide you but he is not forcing us to do anything. I do not think he controls the players too much."

"Someone who has been aggressive in his batting is also aggressive in his coaching."

Clijsters takes Warsaw title

Tennis

AFP, Warsaw

Top seeded Kim Clijsters claimed her first title since October when she defeated Russian number four seed Svetlana Kuznetsova 7-5, 6-2 in the final of the WTA Warsaw Cup on Sunday.

The Russian, who was playing the 300th singles match of her career, has now lost three consecutive Warsaw finals, after falling to Venus Williams in 2004 and Justine Henin-Hardenne last year.

Clijsters said: "I'm happy that I won, but I'm more happy with the way that I played all week."

"I built up my points really well and was patient until I felt like I could go for a winner. I was very consistent throughout the whole match and we had some really good rallies. I was really enjoying myself out there."

The match between the last two US Open champions promised much but failed to live up to expectations, with both players making

plenty of unforced errors and all but two games of the second set featuring breaks of serve.

Clijsters, who won the tournament without conceding a set, used her big forehand to pressure her opponent, but never looked secure as Kuznetsova used the angles well.

A backhand error gave Clijsters a break for 2-1, but Clijsters soon lost her advantage and was broken for 3-3 when Kuznetsova executed a winning crosscourt forehand.

As both players sought a winning edge, Kuznetsova fought off two break points at 5-5 before hitting a forehand wide to leave Clijsters serving for the set.

Even then the Belgian struggled, finally claiming the 14-point game with a forehand winner after holding off two break points.

A dispirited Kuznetsova then dropped the opening game of the second set to love, but Clijsters failed to build on her lead with the next two games both going against serve.

Clijsters then held for 3-1 and a big forehand forced Kuznetsova into

a backhand error to give her a further break for 4-1. After breaks in the next two games, Clijsters needed three match points before closing out the contest with yet another winning forehand.

"I was trying to play well and I didn't," said Kuznetsova.

"My forehand is my best shot but today I wasn't playing it very well."

"I'm not happy that I lost, but I'm pretty okay with the result. I was happy to be in the final because it was a tough draw, the best ever in Warsaw."

"I didn't play well in the final, but you cannot always come there and win."

Clijsters, who badly injured her knee and hip last year in Berlin, will this year skip the event and use Rome as her last warm-up tournament for Roland Garros.

"It's always nice to win matches before going into a Grand Slam, but there's still three weeks and so much can happen," she said.

"I just have to keep working, maintaining my game. Rome will be my next tournament and that will be my next goal."



Belgium's Kim Clijsters returns against Russian Elena Dementieva in the semifinal of the WTA J&S Cup in Warsaw on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

BITS AND BOBS

FROM PAGE 20

Robinson, whom he rates as "the best goalkeeper England have had for quite a while" and the likely fitness of Ashley Cole as major reasons to be optimistic.

However, he does stop short of actually tipping England to win the tournament.

"It is not a forlorn hope but I always think the World Cup is about preparation and I believe English football is suited to England doing well in it," he said.

"I know the players will have a bigger rest than normal this year but it is difficult to think you could go through an English season and then peak in the summer."

While Ferguson has pledged to do everything he can to get Rooney fit, even to the extent of having an oxygen chamber transported to United's Carrington training ground, he remains dubious about the 20-year-old's chances of recovering in time.

Even if Rooney ultimately has to suffer the bitter disappointment of missing out, Ferguson is confident he will enjoy plenty of World Cups throughout a lengthy career.

"The important thing is that Wayne has a future," said Ferguson.

"At his age, he could still play in four World Cups."

"It would be a disappointment for him if he missed it but this is not his last chance."

"All he has to do now is listen to common sense. We can do no more than try our best for him. Hopefully, it will be good enough."

The winger's priceless attribute of searing pace, together with terrific ball control and the ability to provide a pinpoint cross, makes him the sort of player that Eriksson could just take a chance on.

Lennon, however, is struggling to take it all in. "Everything's happened so quickly for me, it's unbelievable," he told journalists this week.

"What has happened to me is almost too fantastic to be true. The World Cup? I never imagined I might be part of it. I'd love to go, what footballer wouldn't? But everything has moved on so quickly for me that it's difficult to take in the possibility."

"I have just been trying to do my best for Spurs and only ever thought I would watch the World Cup on television."

Lennon joined Spurs from Leeds United last July having become the Premier League's youngest player when he made his Leeds debut against his current club in August 2003 at the age of 16 years 121 days.

He got an unexpectedly early opportunity at Spurs after Wayne Routledge cracked a bone in his foot at Portsmouth in the first game of the season and has been in and around the first team ever since.

"You quickly learn that you have to take opportunities when they arise," he said.

With Wayne Rooney likely to miss the World Cup and Michael Owen battling to get back to form after his broken toe, the door could yet open for Lennon.

"I remember as a kid watching Michael and that stunning solo goal against Argentina in the 1998 World Cup. They (Owen and Rooney) were both 18, younger than me now, and they set the world alight."

"I'm not saying for one minute that I could ever make the same impact but obviously it would be a dream come true to go to Germany and then maybe come off the bench and help swing a result."

"My life is amazing. It's seems no time at all since I was kicking a ball around in the streets of Leeds with my brother."

"I was thinking about it the other day, I've got 40 caps and I've only played in my strongest position [attacking midfield] for England for 45 minutes," Gerrard told The Independent.

"Certain people have criticised me at international level, saying I haven't reproduced my Liverpool form, but the reason I'm playing so well for my club is because I'm playing in my favourite role."

"I have this belief: if he's playing in his strongest position, Steven Gerrard will play his best football."

"I wouldn't say frustrating is the right word. Obviously, Frank's [Lampard] doing a fantastic job."

"But it's meant that my England position has been changed virtually every time."

"That's not to say I can't do a job in other positions. But against Uruguay [when Lampard was injured], I got 45 minutes in my favourite role, and I enjoyed it."

Kuwait cancel Tunisia friendly

INTERNET, undated

Tunisia's warm-up match against Kuwait has been cancelled after their opponents withdrew, the Tunisian Football Federation said.

Tunisia were due to play Kuwait at their base in Schweinfurt in Germany just days before the start of their finals campaign. Tunisia are in Group H with Saudi Arabia, Spain and Ukraine.

The federation said Kuwait had told them they would not be able to assemble a side for the fixture. There was no indication whether Tunisia would seek an alternate opponent.

Stevie G steps forward

INTERNET, undated

Steven Gerrard has put himself forward as an alternative to Wayne Rooney.

England will at the very least look to go through the group stages of the World Cup finals without the injured Rooney.

Coach Sven Goran Eriksson has few options, with Peter Crouch mooted as the most likely name to fill in - although Joe Cole and now Gerrard feel they could easily offer an alternative.

Liverpool captain admits he is frustrated at international level as he cannot push forward as he does with such regularity in The Premiership.

Lennon in dreamland

REUTERS, London

Tottenham Hotspur's teenage sensation Aaron Lennon has found himself overwhelmed by speculation that he might be part of England's World Cup squad as he has hardly got used to playing in the Premier League.

Lennon, who turned 19 last month, has emerged as everybody's favourite dark horse for Sven-Goran Eriksson's party for Germany, despite never previously appearing in a full senior squad.

Of a dog

FROM PAGE 17

He led Brazil to titles in the 1999 Copa America and the 2000 pre-Olympic tournament, as well as in last year's Confederations Cup in Germany.

Despite all his accomplishments, Ronaldinho thinks he needs to get better. He recently said he needs to "mature a lot as a player," and improve in some areas of his game, such as left-footed shots.

And to get better, he still relies on an old habit. Bombom is not around anymore, but Ronaldinho has found worthy replacements.

"My dogs in Spain also love to play ball," he told the Zero Hora newspaper recently. "I keep dribbling [with] them all the time too."

Double-double

FROM PAGE 17

To win the Golden Boot for the first time.

The win guaranteed Bremen third place with fourth-placed Schalke 04 falling to a 1-0 defeat at Mainz 05.

The defeat ended Cologne's brief spell in the Bundesliga as they joined MSV Duisburg in being relegated from the German top-flight.

Kaiserslautern or VfL Wolfsburg will join them and the two teams meet next Saturday in a relegation face-off.

Wolfsburg are one point better off than Kaiserslautern and have home advantage for the all-or-nothing showdown.