

Bhola sails into final

SPORTS REPORTER
Bhola Lal of Sonargaon Club romped into the Premier Division final of the GMG Open Squash Tournament with a comfortable 3-0 victory over Dhaka Club's Mahit Chauhan at the Gulshan Club yesterday.

After the seventh round Bhola secured 18 points.
Shawpan Parvez of Bashundhara Club brightened his chances to play the final when he defeated Ram Jagdish of Cadet College Club. Shawpan increased his tally to 15 points with one match in hand against Bishu Nath of Gulshan Club.

ICC to start media bid

REUTERS, Mumbai
The International Cricket Council (ICC) will initiate the process for sale of audio-visual rights of its events between the second half of 2007 and the 2015 World Cup, prior to the Champions Trophy in India in October.

"The period includes 18 ICC tournaments with two World Cups, in Asia (2011) and Australasia (2015), and a minimum of three Champions Trophy tournaments," ICC said in a statement on Sunday.
The sale process of sponsorship rights for the eight-year timeframe is next in the pipeline.

The first two Twenty20 world championships, in South Africa (2007) and England (2009), also feature among the events.

The current agreement with Global Cricket Corporation, which began in 2000, ends with the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies next March and April.

BANGLADESH-KENYA SCOREBOARD

FROM PAGE 17
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-42, 3-56, 4-65, 5-85, 6-112, 7-120, 8-134.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for Bangladesh and Kenya.

Result Bangladesh won by 2 wickets and clinched the three-match 2-0.
Man-of-the-match: Mashrafe Bin Mortaza.

Onus on Sri Lanka

FROM PAGE 17
"It's not been easy to win in Sri Lanka. Hopefully we will change it this time, and we can if we play quality cricket."

India are boosted by the return of Sachin Tendulkar, one-day cricket's leading batsman with 14,146 runs and 39 centuries, after a five-month absence due to surgery on his right shoulder.

South Africa, the number two team in the official one-day rankings behind world champions Australia, have been battered by a string of injuries to key players.

Already without captain Graeme Smith, star all-rounder Jacques Kallis and hard-hitting batsman Justin Kemp, the Proteas are concerned over pace spearhead Makhaya Ntini's hamstring strain and veteran Shaun Pollock's lower back pain.

"Makhaya is 50-50 for the first game but Shaun should be fit to play," said wicketkeeper Mark Boucher, who will captain South Africa in the one-dayers after Ashwell Prince led in the Tests.

South Africa's last one-dayer in April saw them surpass world champions Australia's 434-4 off the penultimate ball in a sensational one-wicket win at the Wanderers in Johannesburg.

Herschelle Gibbs, who smashed 175 off 111 balls in that match, will spearhead the South African batting in the absence of Smith and Kallis.

Each team plays the other twice in the league with the top two advancing to the final on August 29.

SQUADS
INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Virender Sehwag, Sachin Tendulkar, Mohammed Kaif, Yuvraj Singh, Dinesh Mongia, Suresh Raina, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Harbhajan Singh, Ramesh Powar, Ajit Agarkar, Irfan Pathan, Rudra Pratap Singh, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Munaf Patel.
SOUTH AFRICA (from): Mark Boucher (captain), Boeta Dippenaar, Loots Bosman, Herschelle Gibbs, AB de Villiers, Shaun Pollock, Johan van der Wath, Robin Petersen, Andrew Hall, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Ashwell Prince, Roger Telemachus, Thandi Tshabalala, Dale Steyn.

SRI LANKA (from): Mahela Jayawardene (captain), Kumar Sangakkara, Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Tillekeratne Dilshan, Marvan Atapattu, Chamara Kapugedera, Prasanna Jayawardene, Farveez Maharoof, Chaminda Vaas, Muttiah Muralidaran, Dilhara Fernando, Lasith Malinga, Malinga Bandara, Ruchira Perera.

Amla endures more racist insult



CRICINFO, undated

South African middle-order batsman Hashim Amla, who was in the news recently after Dean Jones's "terrorist" gaffe, has been drawn into another racist controversy with a Johannesburg-based electronic goods manufacturing company displaying a derogatory advertisement.

Copy Type Electronics, which distributes Toshiba, displayed an advertisement on a huge board on the N1 Highway in Johannesburg that read: "Thank goodness Amla didn't face a coolie krepere".

The word "coolie" was earlier used by whites and other racist elements to describe the Indian community but the word has now been banned along with other racist terms.

Following complaints, the company apologised to Amla and the general public and said that an employee had illegally put the message on the advertising board.

"We apologise for any offence it could have caused. It is not our policy or intention to harm any ethnic group, faith or individual," said Graham Lane, a spokesperson for the company.

"The necessary steps are being taken to prevent a similar incident in future."

Meanwhile, members of the South African team in Colombo have strongly denied that they jokingly referred to Amla as a "terrorist", denying the statement made by Allan Border two days ago.

Border, the legendary Australian captain who is currently a selector, said he believed the South African players "jokingly" referred to Amla in the same way as Jones had.

That claim, though, has now been rejected by the South African players.

"Hashim and his religious beliefs

are respected by the guys," said the team's media manager, Gordon Templeton.
"I can categorically deny that he has ever had that nickname, and nor has he ever been made fun of in that way."
This was confirmed by bowling

coach Vincent Barnes, who said Amla's religion was respected within the team, just like anyone else's. He added that claims that the team had given him the nickname "terrorist" were rubbish.



HASHIM AMLA

Oleg completes Russian WBC square

AP, Las Vegas

Oleg Maskaev sent Hasim Rahman staggering to the mat, and the Eastern block of title belts was complete.

For the first time, all four heavyweight titles belong to fighters from the former Soviet Union.

But Maskaev wants his adopted land to look past his accent and his European technical style. This US immigrant feels he's the only American heavyweight champion left.

Maskaev stopped Rahman in the 12th round Saturday night with a dramatic last-minute rally to win the WBC heavyweight title.

As Maskaev grabbed his new belt and Rahman collected himself, the crowd of Maskaev's countrymen -- both new and old -- wildly cheered one of the more exciting heavyweight title fights in years for a downtrodden division.

"I believed up to the last minute I could win this fight," Maskaev said. "I got used to him as the fight wore on. ... I knew with three rounds left, I had to win them all to win the fight."

Maskaev, a former Russian Army officer who moved to the U.S. in 1995, entered this fight on a 10-bout winning streak, albeit mostly against unimpressive competition. But the 37-year-old father of four earned a mandatory title shot with a persistence that prompted his promoters to compare him to James J. Braddock, the famed "Cinderella Man."

Maskaev (33-5, 26 KOs) seemed headed for an uncertain decision in an entertaining fight until he sprang to life in the final round, knocking the champion into the ropes with a series of heavy blows.

Rahman (41-6-2), obviously hurt after setting the pace early on, desperately tried to hold on until the final bell, even grabbing Maskaev's leg as he stumbled to the mat. But referee Jay Nardy stopped the fight with 43 seconds left after one last beating in front of a frenzied Thomas and Mack Center crowd.

Rahman was the only U.S.-born heavyweight champion left in a division long dominated by Americans; Maskaev, born in Kazakhstan, lives in Staten Island. Three Eastern European champions -- Ukrainian Wladimir Klitschko (IBF), Russia's Nicolai Valuev (WBA) and Sergei Lyakhovich of Belarus (WBO) -- hold the other significant belts.

"I'm proud of where I come from, but I consider myself a Russian-American," Maskaev said. "This is a message to everyone: European fighters are tough."

Speed bucks Windies up

AFP, Kingston

International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive Malcolm Speed gave preparations for the 2007 World Cup a vote of confidence on Saturday but warned there was still work to do.

Speed said the ICC was happy with what the world governing body had seen in the run-up to the March-April tournament, the first time the World Cup is to be held in the Caribbean.

"There is still much to be done. The message we bring is that we are very happy with progress but we can't relax," said Speed.

"There must be great attention to detail as the venues come out the ground."

The build-up to the event has been dogged by worries over construction delays as well as the price-hikes introduced by hotels aiming to cash in on the marathon event which will draw thousands of extra tourists to the area.

New ICC President, Percy Sonn, claimed that the West Indies is further ahead than South Africa was in 2003, the venue for the last tournament.

"I think the West Indies is, relatively speaking, ahead of where South Africa was, vis-a-vis the final stages of this phase, given that they (the West Indies) are building new stadiums," said the South African-born Sonn.

"South Africa didn't build any new stadiums -- they just improved on the old stadiums. I think the West Indies are fine and further than where South Africa was."

Organising committee chief executive Chris Dehring described the region as the "spiritual embryo of one-day cricket", and highlighted the overwhelming worldwide interest in the tournament as the main reason for the accommodation demand being so strong.

However, he said he is confident there will be enough of a variety of accommodation ranging from bed and breakfast programmes, cruise ships and hotels for fans to choose from.

"I think this will be the most cosmopolitan Cricket World Cup. We will see people from more countries attending this World Cup than any others before," he declared, alluding to the fact that people from 124 countries have applied for tickets.

Pace worry for Proteas



AFP, Colombo

Injury-ridden South Africa may be without pace spearheads Makhaya Ntini and Shaun Pollock for Monday's tri-series opener against hosts Sri Lanka, captain Mark Boucher said Sunday.

Ntini has not fully recovered from a hamstring strain and Pollock has a sore lower back, adding to the Proteas' misery over the absence of regular skipper Graeme Smith, star all-rounder Jacques Kallis and hard-hitting batsman Justin Kemp.

"We will take a decision on Makhaya before the game, but Polly looks doubtful," Boucher said ahead of the day-night game at Premadasa Stadium.

"We won't finalise our team till tomorrow afternoon to give ourselves more time to assess the injury situation."

Boucher took over the one-day captaincy from Ashwell Prince who led the two Test matches on the tour, both of which Sri Lanka won to con-

tinue their domination of South Africa at home.

The last time South Africa toured Sri Lanka in 2004, the hosts won the Test series 1-0 and blanked the tourists 5-0 in the one-dayers.

South Africa have won just one of the 11 limited-overs internationals they have played in Sri Lanka against the home team.

Asked if South Africa had finally found the key to defeating Sri Lanka in their own backyard, Boucher quipped: "Let me know if you have any suggestions."

However the gutsy wicketkeeper was confident that his depleted team will put up a good fight in the series that also features India.

"We want to forget that 5-0 defeat two years ago and start a new chapter," said Boucher.

"We are very proud of the fact that we are the number two team in the world rankings (behind Australia) and are keen to build on that."

"We are missing key players but their absence gives the younger players a chance to put their hands up and be counted."

"We have the players to change the game over 50 overs, so it will all

depend on how we play on a particular day.

"You can be sure there won't be too many boring games in this series and that should please the fans."

South Africa can take heart from their last one-dayer in April that saw them surpass world champions Australia's 434-4 off the penultimate ball in a sensational one-wicket win at the Wanderers in Johannesburg.

Herschelle Gibbs, who smashed 175 off 111 balls in that match, will spearhead the South African batting in the absence of Smith and Kallis.

Bad weather over the Sri Lankan capital, however, threatens to disrupt the series in which each team plays the other twice in the league before the final on August 29.

The wicket at the Premadasa stadium has been covered for the last three days because of incessant rain, but the ground staff predict a prompt afternoon start if the rain keeps away.

Sri Lanka have also delayed naming their playing 11 due to the uncertain weather.

Same England for final Test



AFP, London

England named an unchanged 12-man squad Sunday for the fourth and final Test against Pakistan starting at The Oval on Thursday.

The selectors kept faith with the same side they won the third Test at Headingley by 167 runs to take an unbeatable 2-0 lead on the four-match series while Gloucestershire seamer Jon Lewis, who missed out on that match, retained his squad place having been 12th man in five out of six Tests this season.

"The team has played really well in the last two Test matches and the challenge now is to maintain those standards and keep playing cricket of that quality in the final Test of the series," said England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, whose side won the second Test at Old Trafford by an innings and 120 runs.

The former spinner also praised the role of captain Andrew Strauss, leading the team in the absence of the injured Michael Vaughan (knee) and Andrew Flintoff (ankle).
Earlier this season Strauss was in

charge while England went down 5-0 in a one-day series against Sri Lanka and Graveney added: "Winning the series was an outstanding team effort with everyone playing a part and I am particularly pleased for Andrew Strauss, who took on the Test captaincy in difficult circumstances after our defeat by Sri Lanka in the NatWest Series."

"He deserves full credit for his leadership of the team and I am sure he and the rest of the players will be doing their utmost next week to ensure that we can finish the series with a win."

Swing bowler Matthew Hoggard, who jarred his knee during the third Test at his Yorkshire home ground, also retained his place as his injury was not regarded as serious enough to threaten his participation at The Oval.

SQUAD

Marcus Trescothick, Andrew Strauss (captain), Alastair Cook, Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood, Ian Bell, Chris Read, Sajid Mahmood, Matthew Hoggard, Stephen Harmison, Monty Panesar, Jon Lewis.

Olsson does it easy



AFP, Gothenburg

Russia's Yelena Isinbayeva and home favourite Christian Olsson comfortably won golds in the women's pole vault and men's triple jump at the European championships here Saturday.

The sixth day of competition also saw Belarus surge up the medals table with a haul of three golds and a silver.

Isinbayeva, 24, employed her normal high-risk strategy of entering the pole vault at 4.60m, a stage of the competition where eight of the 11 other vaulters had already crashed out.

"There is still much to be done. The message we bring is that we are very happy with progress but we can't relax," said Speed.

"There must be great attention to detail as the venues come out the ground."

The build-up to the event has been dogged by worries over construction delays as well as the price-hikes introduced by hotels aiming to cash in on the marathon event which will draw thousands of extra tourists to the area.

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Organising committee chief executive Chris Dehring described the region as the "spiritual embryo of one-day cricket", and highlighted the overwhelming worldwide interest in the tournament as the main reason for the accommodation demand being so strong.

However, he said he is confident there will be enough of a variety of accommodation ranging from bed and breakfast programmes, cruise ships and hotels for fans to choose from.

"I think this will be the most cosmopolitan Cricket World Cup. We will see people from more countries attending this World Cup than any others before," he declared, alluding to the fact that people from 124 countries have applied for tickets.

The pressure on her rivals proved too much and any meaningful competition proved short-lived as, first, one-time nemesis and defending European champion Svetlana Feofanova, also of Russia, crashed out at 4.50m.

Monika Pyrek of Poland and Russian Tatyana Polonova soon followed suit at 4.65m -- the Pole taking silver on countback -- as Isinbayeva upped the ante.

Isinbayeva, the reigning Olympic and world champion and the women's World Athlete of the Year, then cleared a new championship record of 4.80m before having the bar raised to a world record height of 5.02m -- she holds the current record of 5.01m.

She failed at all three attempts.

"I thought I was ready for the world record. In better weather, I would have got it," said Isinbayeva, who amazingly only made seven vaults from qualification through to picking up the gold medal.

"Now I have the full collection of gold medals."

In the triple jump, Olympic champion Olsson, who missed the world championships in Helsinki last year through injury, could afford no jumps in his last four attempts without being troubled by the rest of the field.

Olsson, the only athlete in history to hold five titles at the same time -- world outdoors and indoors, European indoors and outdoors and the Olympic crown, jumped a best of 17.67m, with Briton Nathan Douglas (17.21m) taking silver and Marian Oprea of Romania (17.18m) bronze.

In the 110m hurdles final, Latvia's Stanislav Olijar made the most of the absence of world champion Ladj Doudou of France, who was troubled by a nagging calf injury and failed to qualify for the semifinal.

The Latvian's power from the start saw him pull immediately away from the field and he finished the course in 13.24sec, a good two metres up on Germany's Thomas Blaschek.

A good dip at the line from Andy Turner saw the Briton take bronze.

Earlier Saturday, Ulrike Maisch of Germany came strong in the final quarter to pinch the rain-hit women's marathon around the streets of Gothenburg.

The 29-year-old stormed through the field to win in 2hr 30.01min, with Serbia's Olivera Jevtic (2:30.27) taking silver and long-time leader Irina Permiltina of Russia (2:30.53) bronze.

"Some of the runners who were leading were overestimating themselves," said Maisch.

Alesia Turava of Belarus led the inaugural women's 3000m steeplechase from start to finish, her dominant performance seeing her record a season best of 9min 26.05sec.

Russian Tatyana Petrova took silver a full second behind with Poland's Wioletta Janowska in bronze a further 4.5sec adrift.

Belarus also recorded a double gold in the field, world champion Ivan Tikhon winning the men's hammer and Natalia Khronenko claiming gold in the women's shot put by one centimetre from fellow Belarussian Nadzeya Ostapchuk (19.42m).

Dream final dashed



REUTERS, Carson, California

The prospect of a dream Los Angeles Open final between top seed Maria Sharapova and twice champion Serena Williams evaporated on Saturday when both players were upset in the semifinals.

A fatigued Sharapova, chasing a second successive WTA Tour title, went down 7-5, 6-2 to fellow Russian Elena Dementieva while Williams, playing her third event of the year because of a knee injury, lost 6-4, 6-3 to Serbian Jelena Jankovic.

The 21-year-old Jankovic, who

beat Williams when the pair met for the second time in Dubai last year, clinched the opening set by breaking her opponent in the 10th game before the American was warned for racket abuse.

Refusing to be intimidated by the power of Williams, the Serb returned superbly, was rock-solid at the net and controlled most of the rallies from the baseline.

Although severely tested by Williams on her own serve, Jankovic broke the American again in the fourth game of the second set to pave the way for victory.

Former world number one Williams, making a series of uncharacteristic unforced errors, was never able

to get back into the match and the Serb held serve out to love to book her place in Sunday's final.

Despite losing, Williams was satisfied with her week.

In the first semifinal, the 19-year-old Sharapova lost a pulsating opening set in just over an hour after battling back from 1-5 down.

Third-seeded Dementieva, using superb groundstrokes from the baseline, then took advantage of a series of unforced errors by her opponent to sweep through the second set.

It was her second victory over Sharapova in seven career meetings and ended a run of eight wins in a row by the world number four.

Federer tussles into final



INTERNET, undated

Fernando Gonzalez played admirably but ultimately was unable to stop Roger Federer from reaching yet another tournament final.

The world's top player, Federer reached the final of the Rogers Cup on Saturday with a difficult 6-1, 5-7, 6-3 triumph over Gonzalez, the 15th seed from Chile.

Federer, who improved to 7-0 lifetime against Gonzalez, has reached 17 straight tournament finals -- one shy of Ivan Lendl's ATP Tour record. He has won 53 consecutive North American hardcourt matches and 17 straight overall.

But it did not come easily for Federer, who has looked far from dominant this week. After storming through the opening set, he failed to

convert several break points early in the second set and Gonzalez -- who won Olympic gold in doubles in Athens two years ago -- broke him at love in the 12th game to force a decisive set.

Federer saved a break point at 1-2 in the third set, then broke Gonzalez in the seventh game when the Chilean sent a defensive lob long. Two games later, he closed out the match with another break to improve to 61-4 on the year -- 60-0 against all opponents but nemesis Rafael Nadal.

On Sunday, the Swiss superstar will face Richard Gasquet, who defeated fellow rising star Andy Murray 6-2, 7-5, in the first semifinal at the \$2.45 million U.S. Open warmup event.

A 20-year-old Frenchman, Gasquet began his season a disappointing 7-13 but is 15-2 in his last five events, winning a grasscourt title at

Nottingham, England, and a claycourt one at Gstaad, Switzerland.

Murray, 19, slipped to 8-2 under new coach Brad Gilbert. The Brit, who has broken three times in the first set and in the final game of the match, had reached the final at Washington last week.

Murray got only 48 percent of his first serves in and had 24 unforced errors to 24 winners. Gasquet, by contrast, served 67 percent and had 30 winners to 18 unforced errors.

Still, there are plenty of positives for Murray to take away from Toronto, not least the increasing poise he showed in beating David Ferrer, Tim Henman, Carlos Moya and Jarkko Nieminen in consecutive rounds.

Very close to breaking into the world's top 20 as a result, he must now turn his attention to facing Henman again next week in the first round in Cincinnati.